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DEPT FOR AF/SPG, A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
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DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: SE WILLIAMSON URGES BASSOLE TO BE PROACTIVE

REF: KHARTOUM 1067

1. (SBU) Summary: SE Williamson strongly urged Djibril Bassole to embrace his role as Chief Mediator and become proactive in engaging with key decision-makers in both the NCP and rebel movements, during a meeting in Khartoum October 8. He noted the likelihood for progress in Qatar is small and asked Bassole, who remains largely in listening mode, to use the discretion afforded by his role to explore and test new ideas between the two in a non-public setting. He cautioned Bassole not to allow the current window of opportunity to pass, and encouraged him to make use of resources that could strengthen his peace-making ability. End Summary.

2. (SBU) Bassole, who had just come from a meeting with Presidential Advisor Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie, reported that Nafie has yet to respond to his September 16 letter urging GOS action in Darfur and told Bassole he was very partial on these issues. Bassole noted that the NCP was preparing to launch the Sudan People's Initiative on October 16, and that he has been invited; he added that NCP officials said he "would be chief of the show". Bassole noted that during his meeting with Nafie, Nafie had stated that if they do not start talks, then they will not see progress on the ground. Bassole does not believe that the initiative will result in concrete proposals, but is optimistic that it will facilitate the exchange of ideas. "I've read the joint NCP-UMMA proposal, and the ideas presented are reasonable," he said, adding that he would likely use it as a framework for future negotiations. (Note: Bassole provide SE Williamson with an outline for a proposed framework. End Note.) He was less enthusiastic about the efforts of Qatar, which he characterized as lacking proper coordination. The fatal flaw of the Qatari initiative, he opined, is that it is grounded in efforts to invoke an Article 16 resolution at the UN Security Council: "The Qataris, the Arab League and the AU all made a mistake by focusing on Article 16." As a result, he thought the rebels were (rightly) suspicious. "JEM is not ready to go to Doha, and Abdul Wahid has serious reservations as well," he said. Nonetheless, Bassole stated that he planned to use the Qatari initiative to "try and make progress," though he provided scant detail on how he intended to do so.

3. (SBU) SE Williamson thanked Bassole for his efforts and acknowledged the difficulty the Joint Mediator faced, but urged him to take a more proactive role in mediation. "We think you need to take control of the process" and pursue intensive shuttle diplomacy, he said, adding that too much time had been wasted in periodic meetings. While the launching of the Sudan People's Initiative on October 16 will create a "public spectacle," Williamson urged Bassole not to wait for this initiative and continue his mediation. He stressed that the Joint Mediator is in a unique position to provide leadership and facilitation for this process. He urged Bassole to maximize the discretion afforded by his role, his lack of any previous baggage on the issues, and the full support afforded him by the international community. By doing so, Bassole could

actively reach out to NCP-decision-makers as well as to the full spectrum of rebel movements to explore and test ideas in a non-public setting. SE Williamson also encouraged Bassole to make use of resources that could strengthen his ability to mediate, such as the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, which hosted discussions between SLA/Unity and JEM in Geneva on greater security for humanitarian operations in Darfur (Reftel). He offered to help Bassole secure such resources, adding that "no one wants you to succeed more than the United States." He urged Bassole not to let the window of opportunity pass. SE Wililamson closed by saying the United States will support whatever the Chief Mediator does, but said the U.S. does not care about the "theatre." He urged Bassole to leverage his unique position to provide leadership to end the conflict in Darfur.

14. (SBU) Comment: Almost three months into the job (but newly-arrived on the scene fulltime in Sudan,) Bassole has shown determination, but to date, no great sense of urgency in mediating the peace process. It is clear he is eager to take advantage of the current dynamic created by the possibility of an ICC warrant and the regime's need to show progress in the search for peace in Darfur. Getting the rebels to the table will be exceptionally difficult. If Bassole is to have any chance of success in achieving the latter, he will need (and be willing to accept) assistance from the U.S., UK, France and others.

15. (U) SE Williamson cleared this cable prior to transmission.

ASQUINO